

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00 SS-15
NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 EB-08
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FM AMEMBASSY LISBON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1003
INFO USIA WASHDC PRIORITY

UNCLAS SECTION 1 OF 2 LISBON 3075

DEPT PASS AMBASSADOR CARLUCCI
USIA FOR IOP/M, IEU/MCLAUGHLIN

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SOPN, PO, U.S.
SUBJ: MEDIA REACTION - SOARES VISIT

1. APRIL 18-19 MEDIA EMPHASIZED PROBABLE BILATERAL TALKS ON
U.S. FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO PORTUGAL IN REPORTS, ANALYSES
RE SOARES ARRIVAL IN NEW YORK FOR "OFFICIAL WORKING VISIT".
MOST APRIL 18 AFTERNOON PAPERS GAVE CONSIDERABLE PLAY TO DELAY
IN SOARES' NY ARRIVAL BECAUSE OF HIS PLANE'S MECHANICAL
DIFFICULTIES IN LONDON; FRONT-PAGE HEADLINE IN APRIL 18
LEFTIST "DIARIO POPULAR" WAS "SOARES U.S. VISIT: PROBLEMS WITH
'JUMBO' CANCEL OUT CONTACTS PLANNED FOR TODAY IN NEW YORK."

2. MOST AUTHORITATIVE APRIL 19 ARTICLE WAS BY LEADING
PRO-GOVERNMENT "DIARIO DE NOTICIAS" CORRESPONDENT JOSE
RICARDO. HIS NEW-YORK DATELINED PIECE WAS PEGGED LARGELY ON
EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH GOP FONMIN MEDEIROS FERREIRA.
HEADLINE ON ARTICLE WAS "IN WASHINGTON WITH
JAMES CARTER: AMERICAN FINANCING IN SOARES TALKS."
EXCERPTS: "PORTUGAL'S FINANCIAL PROBLEMS WILL CONSTITUTE
THE MAIN POINT IN TALKS PRIME MINISTER MARIO SOARES
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AND FOREIGN MINISTER MEDEIROS FERREIRA WILL HAVE IN
WASHINGTON DAY AFTER TOMORROW WITH PRESIDENT JAMES
CARTER. THE CONGRESS (SIC) OF THE U.S. RECENTLY
APPROVED A 550 MILLION-DOLLAR LOAN TO PORTUGAL FOR
THE NEXT THREE YEARS. THE WAY THIS MONEY WILL BE
USED AND THE STRETCHING OF THAT SUM WITH THE PROBABLE
PARTICIPATION OF OTHER COUNTRIES AND INTERNATIONAL

FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS WILL BE THE THEME OF WASHINGTON CONVERSATIONS. THE AGENDA OF THE VISIT LEAVES IT CLEAR THAT ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL PROBLEMS WILL BE AT THE CENTER OF THE PRIME MINISTER'S AND THE FOREIGN MINISTER'S CONCERNS... THE REVEAL OF THE LAJES BASE AGREEMENT WILL BE EMPHASIZED IN THE WASHINGTON TALKS. BUT THIS WILL RELATE, ON THE PORTUGUESE SIDE, ONLY TO A REAFFIRMATION OF THE INTEREST IN RENEWING THE AGREEMENT WITHOUT THE MATTER BEING DEALT WITH IN DETAIL. AT ANY RATE, THIS ISSUE (LAJES) IS NOT LINKED IN ANY WAY WITH THE ISSUE OF FINANCING ASSISTANCE), ACCORDING TO STATEMENTS BY FOREIGN MINISTER MEDEIROS FERREIRA UPON HIS ARRIVAL IN NEW YORK..." MEDEIROS FERREIRA TOLD REPORTER THAT IN TALKS WITH VANCE "NATURALLY INTERNATIONAL POLITICS IN GENERAL WILL BE REVIEWED WITH A CERTAIN EMPHASIS ON THE MIDDLE EAST AND AFRICA." ASKED BY THE "DIARIO DE NOTICIAS" ABOUT EXTENT TO WHICH AFRICA COULD CONSTITUTE A TOPIC FOR TALKS WITH THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION, MINISTER MEDEIROS FERREIRA UNDERLINED THAT PORTUGAL DID NOT DISPOSE OF ITS COLONIES TO THEN AGAIN BECOME INVOLVED IN AFRICAN PROBLEMS. HE SAID, ON THE OTHER HAND, THAT PORTUGAL WILL HELP INsofar AS IS POSSIBLE IN RELATIONS BETWEEN NEW PORTUGUESE-SPEAKING COUNTRIES AND OTHER NATIONS AND RECALLED THAT THE CONSTITUTIONAL GOVERNMENT HAD DEFENDED U.N. RECOGNITION OF ANGOLA..."

3. BACK-PAGE REPORT IN APRIL 18 "O DIA" WAS HEADLINED, "MARIO SOARES IN U.S. : CONTACTS FOR CONCESSION OF 'MAJOR LOAN' TO PORTUGAL; PRIME MINISTER HONORED FOR HIS FIGHT UNCLASSIFIED

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IN DEFENSE OF HUMAN RIGHTS." UNSIGNED REPORT SAID DURING SOARES "OFFICIAL U.S. VISIT" ALTHOUGH TERMED A WORKING VISIT," THE PORTUGUESE LEADER WOULD "REQUEST NEW FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR PORTUGAL IN ORDER TO 'OVERCOME THE CRISIS AND SAVE DEMOCRACY'." REPORT SPOKE OF CONSORTIUM LOAN AS "APPARENTLY FIRM." IT ALSO SAID "U.S. OBSERVERS BELIEVE THE PORTUGUESE PRIME MINISTER WILL ANNOUNCE THAT HIS GOVERNMENT WILL MOVE TO WITHIN DAYS TO RATIFICATION BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE CONVENTION ON HUMAN RIGHTS,

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NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 EB-08
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FM AMEMBASSY LISBON
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UNCLAS SECTION 2 OF 2 LISBON 3075

DEPT PASS AMBASSADOR CARLUCCI
USIA FOR IOP/M, IEU/MCLAUGHLIN

WHICH WILL LEAD TO INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF THE DEMOCRATIC
STATE AND STATE OF LAW IN PORTUGAL AND GREATLY FACILITATE
THE CONCESSION OF THE INTERNATIONAL 'MAJOR LOAN' PERMITTING
PORTUGUESE RECONSTRUCTION." SEPARATE ARTICLE IN SAME
DATE'S "O DIA" WAS HEADLINED "DIFFICULTIES IN CONCESSION
OF 'MAJOR LOAN'" AND REPORTED THAT EEC COUNTRIES'
PARTICIPATION IN CONSORTIUM WAS DOUBTFUL. PAPER
CITED EEC SOURCES AS SAYING THAT "THE COMMUNITY SEEMS
TO BE RELUCTANT ABOUT THE FINANCING SUGGESTED BY U.S.,
ARGUING THAT IT ALREADY SUPPLIED 1.2 MILLIONS OF DOLLARS
TO PORTUGAL AS A SORT OF BILATERAL AID... THE COMMUNITY
UNDERSTANDS THE PROBLEM OF FINANCING TO BE ESSENTIALLY
POLITICAL, AND SEEKS TO KNOW TO WHAT POINT THE EEC CAN
PARTICIPATE IN ABSORBING OUR (PORTUGUESE) BALANCE OF
PAYMENTS DEFICIT, WHICH IS NOW TOO HIGH..."

4. COMMUNIST PRESS DOWNPLAYED THE VISIT. COMMUNIST
"O DIARIO" APRIL 19 CARRIED PAGE 20 FACTUAL REPORT
FROM NEW YORK HEADLINED SIMPLY, "MARIO SOARES IN
NEW YORK." PRO-COMMUNIST "DIARIO DE LISBOA" OF APRIL 18
TITLED ITS STRAIGHTFORWARD REPORT, "MARIO SOARES
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IN NEW YORK THIS AFTERNOON: 'MAJOR LOAN' ON AGENDA."
TEXT ALSO SAID, "THE LAGES BASE COULD BE ANOTHER
PROBLEM EMPHASIZED DURING THE TALKS. MARIO SOARES
ANNOUNCED UPON DEPARTURE THAT HE WAS 'PREPARED'
FOR SUCH DISCUSSIONS. IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT THE
CONGRESS HAS JUST PRESENTED A STUDY WHICH POSES THE THEORY
OF CLOSING CERTAIN (U.S.) BASES IN SOUTHERN EUROPE."
LAST COMMENT WAS COVERED MORE FULLY IN SEPARATE ARTICLE

IN SAME ISSUE UNDER HEADLINE, "LAJES IN QUESTION?:
CONGRESSIONAL STUDY AGAINST U.S. BASES." ARTICLE
SAID LIBRARY OF CONGRESS STUDY QUESTIONED WHETHER
ALL OVERSEAS MILITARY BASES IN EUROPE WERE STRATEGICALLY
NECESSARY AND RECOMMENDED THAT ALTERNATIVE MEANS OF MEETING
POTENTIAL MILITARY THREATS BE STUDIED. CONCLUDING
PARAGRAPH OF ARTICLE WAS: "IN THE 1973 (MIDEAST) WAR
U.S. PLANES USED THE LAJES BASE ON TERCEIRA, THE
AZORES, EN ROUTE TO ISRAEL. BUT WASHINGTON SOURCES
BELIEVE IT DOUBTFUL THAT TODAY THE PORTUGUESE
GOVERNMENT WOULD PERMIT USE OF THAT BASE IN EVENT
OF A NEW ISRAELI-ARAB CONFLICT."

5. CENTER "JORNAL NOVO" OF APRIL 18 PUBLISHED
COMMENTARY SIGNED ONLY "R.D.S." CRITICIZING STATE
TELEVISION COVERAGE OF SOARES DEPARTURE FROM LISBON
FOR AMSTERDAM AND U.S. WRITER SAID, IN PART: "IF
-- AND THERE IS NO DOUBT -- THE COMMON MARKET IN THE
MEDIUM-AND LONG-TERM WILL BE THE RIGHT ROAD ... THE
TRUTH IS THAT THE UNITED STATES HAS REVEALED ITSELF
AS A FRIENDLY COUNTRY UPON WHICH WE CAN COUNT RIGHT
NOW AND TO GREAT ADVANTAGE. WE CAN CULTIVATE THIS
CONTACT ... FOR IMMEDIATE, PRACTICAL RESULTS. AND
LET'S NOT KILL OURSELVES OFF WITH THIS STORY OF LOAN
INTEREST RATES, BECAUSE THE SOVIET UNION ALSO CHARGES
INTEREST IN THIS AREA. BUT MUCH HIGHER INTEREST, BECAUSE
IT SIMULTANEOUSLY HAS AN EFFECT ON THE FREEDOM OF THE
DEBTOR..."

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Approved on Date:
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Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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